

Examples of Injects Specific to Potential Needs of Older Adults in Emergencies

for use in table tops and other training exercises

Shelter in place / Pandemic Influenza Scenario

During table top and real time exercises, issues facing older adults can be practiced during all phases of an event. The following scenarios can be inserted into an exercise to help planners and responders understand older adult needs during an emergency, and how to better prepare to meet those needs. Further information about the older adult population can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/aging/emergency>.

During an event such as a **pandemic**, the healthcare and social service system may become overloaded. Hospitals and home health agencies may not be able to keep up with the surge in illness. At the same time, social service providers may not be able to maintain services due to social distancing measures or employee illness. Many older adults are only able to live independently with help from friends, family members, caregivers, or in-home services that provide meals, home-based health care, and help with chores and personal care needs. Pandemics may isolate older adults from their support network, and may therefore make some community-dwelling older adults more vulnerable.

- News outlets are reporting that public gatherings have been cancelled due to the spread of the virus. Many older adults do not understand the news stories and are calling local law enforcement for more information. Local law enforcement is asking for assistance from public health to manage information dissemination to the older adult population, taking into account mental and physical impairments of older adults as well as alternative means of communicating with this population.
- A home-health care services company with responsibility for providing home health visits to older adults has several employees refusing to go to work because they are afraid of contracting the virus. Many other employees are unable to report for work because they have been infected with the virus themselves or have family members sick with the virus. There are a large number of older adult clients served by this home health provider who depend on these visits for maintenance of chronic conditions, as well as routine medical care. The local Area Agency on Aging has called the local health department asking for assistance locating personnel to help fill-in for home-health workers in routine home visits.
- The local meal delivery organization (Meals on Wheels) does not have enough staff to prepare and deliver meals to elderly persons who depend on meal delivery to meet daily nutritional needs. Meals on Wheels is requesting assistance from the local emergency management office to help find staff and volunteers to maintain services to the older adult population that relies on their meal delivery.

- The local Area Agency on Aging has received numerous calls from older adults who require oxygen, but who are running low. Medical equipment service providers have not been able to make delivery of oxygen because employees have been out sick or are home taking care of sick family members. Also many other older adults are calling in because they are running out of prescription medication needed to manage multiple chronic conditions such as hypertension and diabetes. Many of these older adults are unable to drive to the pharmacy to re-fill prescriptions and are requesting assistance from local social services organizations. The local Area Agency on Aging is requesting assistance from the local public health department to deliver prescription medication and medical equipment to older adults who are unable to leave their homes.
- Many older adults are a priority for receiving vaccination. Some older adults, however, are not aware that they are a part of the priority population. Vaccine providers are calling the health department for assistance with creating messages targeted to the older adult population.
- Many older adults do not have a way to get themselves to vaccination delivery sites. The local Area Agency on Aging is requesting the public health department to assist in either transporting older adults to vaccination sites, or bringing vaccine to older adults where they live.
- Local Area Agencies on Aging have been receiving numerous calls for home health care agencies to administer the vaccination, but home health care agencies have been having difficulty obtaining the vaccination in a large enough supply to administer to their clients. The local Area Agency on Aging is requesting assistance from the local public health department to obtain the necessary vaccination to dispense to its high-priority older adult clients.